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ABSTRACT

Supporters of alternative certification (AC) claim these programs can help to recruit minority and male teachers and to attract talented individuals with subject-area expertise in areas such as math, science, and foreign languages. Opponents claim that AC can undermine teacher professionalism and that it does and that it does not provide the pedagogical skills taught in traditional teacher preparation programs. Alternative certification programs vary in intent and format, but they generally fit into at least one of eight categories. This publication outlines AC programs in eight states: New Jersey, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin. It includes a lead article, "Alternative Teacher Certification" by Mark Buechler and Nancy Fulford, and three commentaries: "Alternative Routes to Certification: Are We on the Right Track?" (Debby Dresner Shulman); "Toward the Strategic Use of Alternative Routes to Teaching" (Gary Natriello); and "Danger: Explosive! Defusing the Alternative Certification Controversy" (John J. Attinasi and Kenneth J. Schoon). The commentaries discuss AC's relationship to such issues as the role of schools in teacher preparation, the role of state and local agencies in managing teacher supply, the content of teacher education, and the relationship of teacher selection to teacher quality. Included in the Attinasi-Schoon University Northwest, the Urban Teacher Education Program. New Jersey's Provisional Teacher Program, another AC program, is briefly described in an inset, and summaries of regional action in this area are given for seven states: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin. (IAH) innovative inservice alternative certification program at Indiana University Northwest, the Urban Teacher Education Program. New Jersey's Provisional Teacher Program, another AC program, is briefly described in an inset, and summaries of regional action in this area are given for seven states: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin. (IAH)

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Alternative Teacher Certification

By Mark Buechler, *Indiana Education Policy Center*, and Nancy Fulford, *NCREL*

Thirty-nine states are now "experimenting" with alternative methods of teacher certification. This figure is up from 33 states in 1990. Even though it is hotly debated as to whether or not alternative certification is a desirable way to attract talented people into the teaching force or to avert shortages, such programs have been rapidly growing in the United States. President Bush has strongly supported alternative teacher certification, and it is to be included as part of the *America 2000* strategy (Excellence in Education Act of 1991).

One purpose of alternative certification is to attract new and talented individuals into the profession, especially people working in other fields who may want to teach but cannot afford the time and money necessary to complete traditional, four-year teacher education programs. Even accomplished professionals with doctoral degrees in physics, math, and other subjects are essentially barred from teaching those subjects because they have not majored in education. In addition to attracting "career change" people (a source of enrichment from the workforce), alternative certification also may attract the most able students, the culturally diverse, those disposed to teaching in rural and urban settings, and males. Programs also can be directed to subject areas in which the recruitment and retention of teachers are difficult.

Program Descriptions

Alternative certification programs vary considerably across the nation in their intent and format. Some accept candidates in shortage areas; others accept qualified candidates in any field. The amount of pre-classroom training varies widely as does the amount and type of continued training/supervision and length of internship. However, alternative certification programs generally consist of some or all of the following components:

- A bachelor's degree in the subject to be taught along with a passing score on a certification test
- Brief, intensive training, usually the summer before teaching begins
- A supervised internship coinciding with assumption of full teaching responsibilities, as well as additional hours of training and substantial supervision
- Certification recommendation by the employing district

The National Center for Education Information (NCEI) recently developed the following eight classifications of alternative routes:

Class A: Programs to attract talented individuals who hold bachelor's degrees in fields other than education into elementary and secondary education. These programs are not restricted to shortages, secondary grade levels, or subject areas; they involve teaching with a trained mentor and contain formal pedagogical instruction during the school year and/or summer school.

Class B: Certification routes to bring talented individuals who already hold bachelor's degrees into teaching. These programs involve formal instruction and mentoring; states restrict such programs to shortage areas and/or secondary grade levels and/or subject matters.

Class C: Review of academic and professional background transcripts for those who already hold bachelor's degrees. Programs involve individually designed inservice and course-taking to teach competencies for certification; *the state and/or local districts have the major responsibility for program design.*

Policy Briefs are reports on the status of current issues in education from a national perspective, descriptions of actions and agendas in the NCREL region, commentaries by experts from their particular point of view, and resources for further information.

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Class D: Review of academic and professional background transcripts for those who already hold bachelor's degrees. Such programs include individually designed inservice and course-taking for certification; *institutions of higher education have the major responsibility for program design.*

Class E: Post-baccalaureate programs based at institutions of higher education.

Class F: Emergency route programs. These programs provide emergency certificates or issue waivers that allow individuals to teach—usually without supervision—while taking courses for full certification.

Class G: Programs for those with few requirements left for full certification, such as those moving to other states or desiring to receive additional education endorsements.

Class H: Routes for "special" people with qualifications, such as well-known authors or statesmen.

Some states actually have more than one route by which someone can obtain teacher certification as long as the person already holds at least a bachelor's degree. Feistritzer and Chester (1991) identified 91 routes to teacher certification in reporting states. They believe that there are actually more routes that were not reported. Most of the *new* programs are those intended to attract talented people who already hold bachelor's degrees, include formal instruction and mentoring, and are not restricted to shortage areas or secondary education. Eight states reported *new* programs with these characteristics in their 1991 study, while a total of 11 states reported having these program characteristics. Another eight states have programs that also involve formal instruction and mentoring, but are restricted to shortage areas and/or are for secondary education.

The other 72 programs reported included those with emergency certification or waivers which allow individuals with at least bachelor's degrees to teach while they complete a traditional teacher education program, even if unsupervised. These programs include a review of transcripts and background and either state-, local district- or higher education-prescribed coursework for individuals to become fully certified. There were only a few routes or programs reported to upgrade or provide additional certification, or for those who have only a few certification requirements left to complete (Feistrizer & Chester, 1991).

Pros and Cons

Critics of alternative certification submit that subject matter expertise does not automatically confer the ability to teach. Many in higher education and teacher training institutions stress the need for strong pedagogical skills developed through the traditional teacher preparation programs which include classes in instructional strategies, classroom management, and discipline. They believe that instead of alternative certification programs, there is a need to basically restructure preservice and inservice programs in order to improve the quality of the teacher workforce. They also believe that alternative certification programs dilute the concept of professionalism of teachers.

Supporters, on the other hand, assert that current teacher training has been ineffective in recruiting and retaining the teachers needed for today's and tomorrow's classrooms. They feel that there is often too much pedagogical theory and too little practical preparation for the realities of today's classrooms. They argue that teacher education programs have been slow, at best, to redesign their programs to meet children's needs. And, they feel these programs lack the ongoing support of mentor/teacher relationships as well as continued inservice development for practicing teachers. Supporters also contend that the three main advantages of alternative certification are that it attracts talented people into the teaching force, can combat teacher shortages, and can provide diversity, both in culture and gender.

The effectiveness of alternative certification will ultimately not be determined by argument but by evaluating existing programs to determine if they actually do improve the teaching force. Several such evaluations and studies have been conducted (Darling-Hammond, forthcoming; Smith, 1991). In the meantime, the trend appears to be toward increasing numbers and types of alternative programs. We hope you will benefit from the descriptions of trends in alternative certification in the NCREL region and the thoughts of some already involved in the debate.

■

An Example of an Alternative Certification Program

New Jersey's Provisional Teacher Program is one of the first and perhaps the best known example of an alternative certification program. To qualify for a Provisional Teaching Certificate, a candidate must have: a) a bachelor's degree in the subject to be taught; b) a passing score on the National Teachers Exam (NTE) subject area exam; and c) a job offer from a school district that has been approved by the state to participate in the program.

The provisional teacher must take 80 hours of instruction at a regional training center before assuming full teaching responsibilities, and another 120 hours during the first year of teaching. The training centers are affiliated with teacher preparation institutions, and classes are often taught by faculty. However, the curriculum is designed by the state department of education.

The first 20 days of teaching are spent under the close supervision of a veteran teacher. Then the provisional teacher takes charge of the classroom, bolstered by a four-person support team—including the principal and mentor teacher—who carry out a rigorous schedule of observation and evaluation. At the end of the year, the principal recommends for or against full certification.

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The following are topics that have been explored in past issues of *Policy Briefs*. A limited number of each issue is available from NCREL at no charge.

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- Recruiting and Retaining Minority Teachers (1990)
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- Performance Assessment (1990)
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To request past publications please contact Mary Fran Tilton, 708-571-4700.

Regional Action & Agendas

Editor's Note: The following information was submitted by State Educational Agency (SEA) personnel and edited by NCREL. For more details, please contact the SEA representatives listed at the end of this section. Definitions of what is or is not alternative certification may vary from state to state, as it does among "experts."

Illinois

The State Teacher Certification Board and Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) encourage the development of alternative routes for individuals to become teachers through programs designed for the non-traditional student. In fact, state legislators recently passed a plan to issue a resident teacher certification to individuals completing non-traditional programs. This certification will allow limited practice in schools.

The ISBE plans to continue developing non-traditional programs for use in teacher education institutions.

Indiana

Indiana has three routes to alternative teacher certification:

- Limited license allows four years or more of teaching while completing educational coursework. However, 600 to 800 limited licenses granted by the State Board of Education each year are to people who hold licenses in other teaching areas.
- The Urban Teacher Education Program is a pilot project in northwestern Indiana aimed at increasing the number of teaching professionals in urban schools (see "Guest Commentary" later in this issue).
- The Occupational Specialist Pattern is funded through the federal Carl Perkins Act for vocational teachers.

The Indiana Department of Education sought—but did not obtain—authority in the 1991 legislative session to create another alternative route for teacher certification. This legislation would have made it feasible for the state to certify qualified people who hold undergraduate college degrees in subjects other than teacher training. No new legislation concerning alternative certification is planned for 1992.

Iowa

Iowa does not have an alternative licensure program for teachers. However, in 1989, the legislature redesigned the Board of Educational Examiners and gave it new and expanded authority and responsibility. This legislation included the concept of alternative licensure or preparation. Thus, the Board was given broad authority to develop a program initiative in this area.

In response, the Board has approved a "draft discussion document" that sets out a proposed plan for an alternative preparation program. This draft proposal will be under review and discussion during 1991-92. The review process will include the colleges and universities approved for teacher education, as well as other professional organizations that have a direct interest in alternative preparation and certification.

Michigan

Michigan has made no provisions nor introduced any legislation for alternative certification. However, members of the Michigan Department of Education plan to convene a group to develop a plan for alternative routes to teacher certification.

Minnesota

Two programs have been approved and are in effect for the 1991-92 school year. One, the Alternative Preparation for Teacher Licensure Program, allows individuals to work toward certification while teaching. The program's aim is to augment the Minnesota teacher corps with individuals whose backgrounds are especially relevant in today's classrooms. The program will boost the number of minorities in teaching and link education theory with classroom practice.

To qualify as a candidates, an individual must have a baccalaureate degree, pass Minnesota's basic skills test for teachers, be offered employment in a school district approved to operate an Alternative Preparation Licensure Program, have completed a college major in the subject area to be taught or have five years experience working in a field related to the teaching position, and provide documentation of successful experiences in working with children. Candidates may become fully licensed teachers after the first school year, based on evaluations and recommendations from the Resident Mentorship Team.

The Resident Mentorship Team, consisting of K-12 classroom teachers, administrators, and college faculty, will prepare candidates for initial classroom teaching and will provide peer coaching, formal instruction, and evaluation throughout the school year. Alternative preparation sites—school districts in cooperation with colleges having teacher education programs—must receive approval from the Minnesota Board of Teaching.

State appropriations in the amount of $150,000 will be allocated among selected sites, primarily to support the Resident Mentorship Teams. The state has also appropriated $50,000 for minority fellowship grants. Individual grants up to $5,000 are available to minority candidates, with awards paid over two-year periods.

The other program is the Limited License for Secondary School. These limited licenses are only valid for instruction at the secondary level in subjects in which the applicant has had major or minor preparation. A local school superintendent must certify the non-availability of a fully certified teacher. These licenses are valid

for one year and are renewable each year if the holder has completed eight quarter hours of required college credit.

Ohio

Teacher preparation has long been a priority in Ohio. Education and certification standards have been revised dramatically within the past 11 years, first in 1980 and more recently in 1987.

On October 3, 1991, Ohio held an NCREL/Department of Education policy seminar to examine university and Department of Education linkages which might affect certification programs. An ongoing task force of the participants will continue to work on the issue.

Effective July 1, 1990, rules for the Internship Certification Program were promulgated in response to Amended Substitute Senate Bill 140, Section 3319.282. Under the internship certification standards, an initial high school internship certificate will be issued to an individual who has a baccalaureate degree, has completed a major in a high school subject area, is of good moral character, has been recommended for certification by a superintendent, and has met the following:

- At least three years of successful experience related to the applicant's subject area of teaching
- Completion of a preservice course of study consisting of at least six semester hours of coursework in the principles and practices of teaching
- Successful completion of the National Teacher Examination (NTE) in general knowledge and subject area content knowledge

An internship certificate may be renewed for one additional year to enable completion of an internship course of study consisting of at least 12 semester hours of coursework related to the principles and practices of teaching. The total of 18 semester hours of coursework must be completed within two years. Successful completion of all other components and a passing score on the NTE examination in professional knowledge make the intern eligible for the initial four-year provisional teacher's certificate in Ohio. The internship certificate is valid only for the district that has an approved internship program and that has offered the individual a contract under Section 3319.282 of the Revised Code.

Wisconsin

Comprehensive standards for teacher preparation are in place. Part of the program approval code allows for experimental programs as alternative approaches to meet the standards. In addition, state educators have proposed changes in program approval rules that will both clarify and strengthen teacher education regulations. Guidelines for innovative and experimental programs have been drafted.

One experimental program is a flexible teacher preparation program designed by Martin Haberman at the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee. Classroom teachers—many of whom are minorities—enroll in the program to complete the requirements for a teacher license. The program provides flexible options to the traditional campus program.

Legislation also has been passed that creates a "scientist in resident" concept for retired engineers and science/math professionals. These individuals will enroll in a summer program to prepare them to receive a teaching permit that will allow them to work under the direction of math and science teachers in middle-level and high schools.

Wisconsin plans the promulgation of rule amendments and communication of experimental program guidelines. Copies of program approval rules, certification standards, and experimental program guidelines are available from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. ■

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Commentary

Alternative Routes to Certification: Are We on the Right Track?

By Debby Dresner Shulman, *NCREL*

The last decade has seen tremendous change in the area of teacher preparation and credentialing. Changing demographics, the need for better representation of school populations, and the lack of specialized teachers in areas such as math and science have stimulated many states to establish alternative routes into teaching which bypass traditional teacher education courses. In a study of alternative certification programs across the country, Emily Feistritzer (1990), of the National Center for Educational Information, reports that 33 states currently have provisions for some form of alternative certification. In essence, states that allow for alternative certification may drop their regular teacher certification requirements and allow prospective, uncertified teachers to enter the field via an alternative route. Unlike traditional undergraduate teacher-education programs, alternative training and certification are often the school districts' responsibility. Many educators question, however, whether the alternative certification option for teacher education is in the best interest of tomorrow's students.

In the past, states created alternative approaches to certifying and preparing teachers during teacher shortages. Although this practice has been criticized by the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE) and the Association of Teacher Educators (ATE) as a means of replacing teachers, there may be some advantages to the alternative route. Some teacher educators claim that alternative certification may be necessary in urban and rural communities that are in need of qualified teachers in specific content areas. Alternative route programs also claim to have attracted an older pool of candidates who have concentrated more on traditional academic subjects at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Finally, alternative certification may attract more diverse minority candidates who would never have gone into education during their undergraduate studies, or would not have returned to education had they needed to take traditional education courses. Therefore, alternative certification can be viewed as a way of improving the quality as well as the quantity of teachers.

"It is imperative that we continue to track these programs and evaluate them in light of very individual circumstances."

While alternative routes may provide the above advantages, some researchers and teachers have expressed concerns regarding their benefits. Two common concerns are the abbreviated classroom preparation period and the impact these teachers have on their students. The lack of preparation may cause teachers to leave the classroom, not because teaching was an inappropriate career choice, but because they lack instruction on classroom management and methods of teaching.

In a study of urban teachers who entered the field through alternative certification, research showed that the alternative-route teachers lacked critical aspects of teaching competence. Whereas these teachers had the content knowledge to teach their subject matter, they had a simplistic concept of how to instruct their students appropriately. Proper preparation might have enabled them to assess their students' prior knowledge and tailor the instruction more appropriately. Without this information, they relied on teaching methods that reflected how they themselves were taught, thus heading for failure and ultimately leading to a variety of classroom problems (Shulman, 1989).

Arthur Wise and Linda Darling-Hammond (1991) argue that fully prepared teachers who obtain certification through standard undergraduate or graduate programs often are far more effective in promoting student learning than teachers without this training. Furthermore, their research shows that beyond basic subject matter knowledge, it is the *extent* of pedagogical training that makes the difference in teacher effectiveness. Alternative routes also are viewed by some as undermining the attempts to professionalize teaching because they minimize the need for a specialized knowledge base and controlled entry, the hallmarks of established professions (Zumwalt, 1991).

Why, then, do policymakers and educators continue to pursue the implementation of these alternative certification programs across the country? One reason, as mentioned, is that alternative routes do attract a more diverse group of individuals into the classroom. More males and minorities are entering urban classrooms, providing much needed role models for today's students. Many rural communities suffering from teacher shortages in content areas such as math, science, and foreign language also may reap the benefits of those certified through alternative routes. Individuals with bachelor's degrees in the sciences are recruited heavily to serve in these areas and very often have successful experiences in the classroom.

Moreover, alternative route programs are able to recruit candidates for urban classrooms from ethnic and cultural backgrounds similar to the students they teach. Experts such as Gary Natriello (personal communication, November 1, 1991),

Teachers College, Columbia University, feel that these teachers may be more appealing to urban school districts than traditionally certified, inexperienced teachers because of their ethnic and cultural similarities with students.

While this option may be encouraging, the debate on the nature of effective teacher education continues. As policymakers resolve this argument, they must consider the goals and needs expressed by *each* state or school district in its search for qualified, diverse teachers. Although research is being conducted on the effectiveness and benefit(s) of alternative certification programs, the "jury is not in yet." Much more and specific research needs to be conducted and analyzed. It is imperative that we continue to track these programs and evaluate them in light of very individual circumstances. As we are documenting and evaluating their effects, it is our responsibility as educators and researchers to continue to improve traditional teacher education programs. We must not view alternative certification as a panacea for teacher education, but, as its name implies, as a possible alternative. ■

Debby Dresner Shulman, a former teacher, is Program Assistant for NCREL's Early Childhood and Family Education program area.

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Guest Commentary

Toward the Strategic Use of Alternative Routes to Teaching

by Gary Natriello, *Teachers College, Columbia University*

The majority of states have established some form of alternative preparation for entry into teaching. And now President Bush has endorsed such alternative routes as a key element in improving U.S. schools. Therefore, the time has come to seriously consider the contribution of such programs to the quality of teacher preparation and the teaching force as a whole. One might wish that the impact of such programs would have been examined prior to their widespread adoption, but like other educational innovations, the alternative route into teaching is an idea that has been widely adopted well ahead of evidence of its effectiveness.

This is not to say that decisions to adopt alternative preparation routes were baseless. Indeed, in some cases these decisions were rooted in an underlying view of traditional college-based teacher education patterns as ineffective for producing enough well qualified individuals to staff our nation's schools. In other cases, decisions were based on a diffuse image of public schools as ineffective and a sense that traditionally prepared teachers must somehow be at fault. Once a few states had implemented alternative route programs, they were, in some ways, easy models for other states to follow since they typically involved no new state expenditures and offered the benefit of visible action in support of school improvement.

Alternative route programs that challenged the exclusive franchise of colleges in teacher preparation often met resistance from higher education. However, this resistance only offered the added inducement of allowing alternative route supporters to portray themselves as crusaders attempting to wrest control away from the "stodgy, self-interested teacher educators" who had been unable to turn out first-rate teachers for the public schools. Proponents and opponents of alternative route programs have quickly sorted themselves into unified camps, the former arguing that alternative routes are essential to restore quality to our schools and the latter claiming that such policies constitute an attack on the professionalism of teachers and expose our children to individuals who have not been proven safe to practice.

The battle over alternative route programs all too often has contained more heat than light. If we continue to focus only on the pros and cons of alternative route programs, we will miss an opportunity to consider the broader issues such

programs raise regarding the development of teachers. Out of what has been a rather tawdry discourse between proponents and opponents of alternative route programs may yet come the elements for a strategic vision of the role of alternative route programs, and of the city and state agencies that foster and implement them. The elements of such a strategic vision already are emerging as more state and local education agencies consider alternative route programs and as new variations emerge and older programs are modified and refined. Further, alternative route programs have contributed to at least four elements of a broader strategic vision of teacher preparation.

A new role for state and local education agencies in the management of the supply of teachers. Alternative route programs often have been accompanied by a subtle but important shift in the role of state and local education agencies. As these agencies have considered alternative routes into teaching, they have become more active participants in the recruitment and preparation process. State departments and local school districts have had to make decisions about procedures for the recruitment, selection, preparation, and certification of teachers. Even in cases where some of these responsibilities have been delegated to colleges, these agencies are left with the responsibility of coordinating the effort.

Greater attention to the contribution that selection processes might make to the quest for teacher quality. It is only a slight exaggeration to say that traditional teacher educators have focused on the socialization function in teacher certification to the near exclusion of the selection function. Of course, teacher education programs do establish admissions criteria and standards for program completion that deny entry to those clearly not suited for the job. In the past, state certification regulations have established minimum standards for licensing. However, the greater effort has typically been devoted to socializing individuals or preparing them to become teachers.

Because the number of individuals with an interest in teaching seldom exceeds the number of available teaching positions—or at least the number of positions in teacher preparation programs—neither teacher educators nor state regulators have had much experience with highly selective admissions and certification processes. In some cases, alternative route programs have generated large applicant pools and confronted officials, often for the first time, with the potential contribution of the selection process to the creation of a highly talented pool of teachers.

"The battle over alternate route programs all too often has contained more heat than light."

Careful examination of the content of teacher education. As long as teacher education remained under the complete control of colleges and as long as such colleges utilized the standard academic arrangements for offering such education, many fundamental assumptions about the content of teacher education could remain unexamined. However, when alternative route programs removed teacher education from the exclusive control of colleges, program managers had to confront some long-dormant issues. What do beginning teachers need to know? Where is the best place to learn? What kinds of preparation have a demonstrated relationship to performance in the classroom? It would be an overstatement to credit alternative route programs alone with raising such issues in an era in which teacher educators are reexamining many of the fundamental arrangements of teacher education. However, alternative route programs raise issues that fall outside the purview of traditional undergraduate and graduate programs.

The role of schools in the preparation of teachers. The question that has been raised most directly and most exclusively by alternative route programs is the role of schools in the preparation of teachers. Although college-based programs are increasingly examining the role that schools and school personnel can play in teacher education, alternative route programs which rely almost exclusively on schools and school personnel can push the issue to the limit, often with mixed results. Despite the appeal of the notion that the best place to learn to teach is in a real school under the guidance of experienced teachers, the diverse experiences of alternative route teachers have raised major questions about the school as an environment for professional development.

The impact of alternative route programs on the quality of the teaching corps remains to be determined. However, alternative route programs and the debates that surround them can be catalysts for serious reconsideration of some fundamental issues regarding the preparation of teachers. ■

Gary Natriello is Associate Professor of Sociology and Education at Teachers College, Columbia University. He is the author of numerous articles and book chapters and the co-author of two books: Teacher Evaluative Standards and Student Effort *and* Schooling Disadvantaged Children: Racing Against Catastrophe. *Professor Natriello's current research includes a longitudinal study of college-prepared and alternative route teachers in New Jersey, a study of the use of student performance information in high school tracking systems, and an examination of the impact of school finance reform on school district organization.*

Guest Commentary

Danger: Explosive! Defusing the Alternative Certification Controversy

By John J. Attinasi and Kenneth J. Schoon, *Northwest Indiana's Urban Teacher Education Program (UTEP)*

Alternative routes to certification. The alarm sounds when the phrase is uttered. Sharpshooters from academic and administrative units arrive. They have been prepared to contain the controversy before it explodes. The time bomb is ticking. If the wrong wire is clipped a disaster will follow.

The metaphor can be extended. Education in urban schools is also a time bomb, ticking as teachers retire or burn out and as school populations of teachers and students increasingly diverge in culture, learning styles, and socioeconomics. A new cadre of teachers is needed: competent in content, with pedagogical skills based in theories of education and developed in reflective apprenticeship.

Northwest Indiana's Urban Teacher Education Program (UTEP) has attempted to defuse the explosive issues of alternative certification (AC) and, at the same time, address the ticking crisis in schools through an innovative inservice certification program (Option II) for graduates with degrees outside education. (Option I is undergraduate preparation in urban professional development schools.) Approved experimentally for five years by the state, this alternative route was devised through collaboration among the Gary, Hammond, and East Chicago (Indiana) schools and Indiana University Northwest. The origin and structure of the program itself cuts one of the hot "wires" in the AC time bomb—origin and authority.

Higher education and accrediting organizations have traditionally controlled teacher preparation, subject to approval by state offices. Local schools and teacher organizations are also stakeholders, but until now have been marginal to teacher preparation programs. One controversy in AC programs derives from the receiving group desiring to have greater control.

Another authority issue is the danger that AC programs may be the first wave of reducing the pedagogical component of teacher preparation. This issue also is an explosive one, compounded by the need today for greater content preparation, the proliferation of fifth-year programs, and laws (now in New Jersey and Texas) which limit undergraduate education courses to 30 and 18 credits, respectively, including student teaching. These trends, more than any snub regarding control, have universities and the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) worried about the future ushered in by alternative certification. (Wise & Darling-Hammond, 1991).

New Jersey has one of the best known AC models (see page 2, this issue), one which may be proposed for national replication. It was established at the state level with no higher education involvement in its design of implementation (Carlson, 1990). It has been criticized for its content-based pedagogy which is virtually the same for all applicants from kindergarten to high school (Smith, 1991). Trends such as this may pinch a second vital wire—the quality of teaching—which will detonate the time bomb if cut.

Efforts to change teacher-licensing standards cannot lose sight of the primary goal—to improve the quality of education in schools. Neither the debate over turf, nor the expediency of addressing teacher shortages can eclipse that goal. Many AC initiatives lack adequate content in classroom management and teaching methods (see Shulman Commentary, this issue). If pedagogy and personal guidance are diminished, there can be no confidence in the quality of teacher preparation, whether regular or alternative.

In UTEP's Option II, 24 credits of education courses—including urban teaching methods, psychology, content methods, social issues, practicum, and a reflective seminar—provide the background and support for teaching interns. The Option II coordinator, a visiting professor with 22 years classroom experience, other professors, and assigned mentors in the intern's school reflect with the intern regularly and provide feedback. This method is far better than the non-program of having emergency teachers on limited license without support and also better than the horror stories of AC with little supervision, mentorship, or opportunity for reflection (Smith, 1991).

Another promise of Option II is that it puts more appropriate people in the classroom—competent in content, mature, and committed, many of whom have urban experience and diverse backgrounds. The challenge taken by UTEP has been to apply high standards to the pedagogical preparation of these interns. Option II interns teach in secondary schools where their content specialties are needed, chiefly in math and science. They must have completed appropriate bachelor's degrees with a 2.5 GPA and have a minimum of 24 credits in the subject they will teach. The school system, the content area professor, and an interview team all screen and recommend the applicants. During the summer before, throughout the year, and into the summer after the internship, many education professionals work with the interns, allowing review, reflection, and remediation of teaching practice.

The essential wire of resources cannot be cut in alternative routes. That 98 percent of New Jersey interns were later certified does not diminish the point that, due to lack of resources, the schools could not provide the needed training, supervision, and mentorship (Smith, 1991). Simply saying that there will be mentorship and supervision, but not providing the fund-

ing, coordination, and supervisory time, has given AC the character of the Trojan Horse, a seeming gift to the profession that will ultimately destroy it.

Research and evaluation are necessary to judge the features of AC, to scrutinize particular programs and the quality of graduates, and, in brief, to separate promise from quick fix. Zumwalt (1991) has identified the issues in a clear comparison of AC in Los Angeles, New Jersey, and Connecticut. Zumwalt's legitimate concern is that AC may undermine professionalism. UTEP has worked through a school-university collaboration to select candidates with a high degree of professionalism, and, according to evidence from an ongoing formative evaluation plan, interns are teaching successfully.

A strength of AC programs is that they often bring diversity among interns to match the diversity of the schools. UTEP's Option II has provided additional minority teachers to the schools of Gary and, like the program in Dallas (Hutton, Lutz & Williamson, 1990), contains a higher proportion of minority candidates than the regular teacher preparation program.

An overriding goal of UTEP is to facilitate school improvement cooperatively, beginning with the teacher (Attinasi & Sandoval, 1992; Carlson, 1991). Strengthening licensing requirements may prevent the academically weak from teaching, but a creative change in licensing should both encourage the academically strong while enlarging the number of acceptable teacher candidates in urban areas. Alternative routes should be seen within the larger perspective of the pressures to improve and professionalize teaching and the demands on urban schools to employ teachers appropriate to their needs. Several final points may connect AC to wider issues:

- Turf wars can be avoided by collaborative planning and authority.
- Lack of pedagogical preparation poses a legitimate threat, not just in the alternative modes, but in teacher preparation generally. The interplay of content, pedagogy, and educational theory and practice in AC is part of a larger debate.
- The promise of apprenticeship cannot be broken, leaving interns in AC little different from limited license teachers of the past. Instead, creative mentoring and reflective dialogue with interns can save the best and brightest from becoming dull and harmful to urban youth.
- Research regarding AC should include rich descriptions of interns' practice, not just simple comparisons of AC interns with traditional teacher trainees. AC evaluation should benefit from new forms of teacher education assessment and attempt to answer questions regarding the effect over time of alternative route personnel on their schools and students.

Option II inservice certification may provide the model for meeting the AC challenge. By defusing the superficial controversy and identifying the paramount dangers, UTEP in northwest Indiana has attempted to provide a positive use for the explosive issues in teacher certification. The essentials include: (1) joint authority, (2) content combined with pedagogy, (3) resources to guide interns, and (4) a clear and substantive evaluation plan. As it turns out, these elements must be the part of any wave of future teacher education. ■

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